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United States Department of State


Washington, D. C. 20520

July 11, 1994
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INFORMATION MEMORANDUM
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TO: The Deputy Secretary
FROM: IO - Douglas J. Bennet 
SUBJECT: Peacekeeping in Rwanda, Georgia and Haiti --
A Comparative Analysis

SUMMARY

The problems in Rwanda, Georgia, and Haiti all stem from internal conflicts. In each instance one permanent member of the UN Security Council (France, Russia, and the U.S., respectively) has assumed a leading role in attempting to assist in resolving the conflict through a peacekeeping operation (PKO). Also, in each instance the interested Council member has sought UNSC action either to create, fund and operate a PKO, or to endorse (and perhaps fund) the member's own peacekeeping efforts.

This paper evaluates the merits of the cases for UN peacekeeping mandates in each situation. It does so in terms of the potential peacekeeping benefits and the appropriateness of the non-UN actors who seek to carry out the UN mandates in each case. We conclude that UN endorsement of the French-led effort in Rwanda and the proposed U.S.-led effort in Haiti is clearly warranted. In Georgia, the questionable utility of a PKO and concerns about Russian motives and intentions cast doubt on the desirability of a UN endorsement at this time, but do not rule it out.

DISCUSSION

Because a member of the Perm 5 has taken the leading position seeking UN involvement or blessing in each of these conflicts, and because of the convergence in time for action, an equivalence has been posited by some. The Russians have been explicit in demanding support for their initiatives on

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Georgia as a quid pro quo for supporting U.S. and French initiatives on Haiti and Rwanda. Our failure to support the other members' initiatives, in addition to jeopardizing support for our own in Haiti, could affect cooperation on a range of UNSC issues, as well as have an impact on wider bilateral relations.

Both similarities and differences exist in the nature of the crises, the magnitude of their regional and international ramifications, and the proposed roles for the UN and the lead actor. We believe that the key elements to be evaluated in considering UNSC action are the potential benefits of the proposed action and the appropriateness of the lead actor.

In Rwanda, France's colonial history and prior aid to the Hutu-dominated Rwandan government are troublesome but less salient factors given the humanitarian importance of stopping the slaughter. Similarly, our record of hemispheric interventions and the fact that the U.S. has the most to gain from stopping migration pressures in Haiti argue that others should share the lead. The fact is, however, that others are not willing to join us in the lead. The importance of facilitating the return of democratic government, the urgency of increasing humanitarian assistance and resuming economic development aid, and the need to renew democratic institution building require the U.S. to take the lead. In Georgia, uncertainty over Russian intentions in the former Soviet Union, together with doubts over the benefit of any PKO in the current circumstances, call into question the desirability of a UN endorsement.

A discussion of each operation is attached.

Attachments:

Tab A - Rwanda
Tab B - Georgia
Tab C - Haiti

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Cleared: IO: GFWard
IO/PHO: JSBrims
IO/UNP: JSnyder
S/SAH: WMcIlhenny
TF3: DBard
S/NIS: JPresel
AF/C: KAiston
PM/ISP: RWharton
DRL: MMartinez
S/P: SButcher
P: EBrimmer

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RWANDA

As in Haiti and Georgia, the UNSC approved a PKO for Rwanda to help implement an agreement between the conflicting parties. Also as in Haiti and Georgia, the failure of one or both parties to abide by its commitments prevented the UN PKO from completing its mission.

In this instance, the UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) had deployed 2,500 lightly-equipped personnel to monitor compliance with the August 4, 1993 peace accords. Dealing with the resumption of full-scale hostilities was outside UNAMIR's mandate and capabilities. Consequently, the UN ordered withdrawal of the bulk of its personnel.

The renewed ethnic civil war has led to a humanitarian catastrophe with a death toll in the hundreds of thousands. The stream of refugees from Rwanda has placed a huge burden on neighboring countries. While the conflicts in Haiti and Georgia also have produced displaced persons, the scope and magnitude of the human rights violations in Rwanda are far greater.

Responding to the situation, the UNSC authorized an increase in the strength of UNAMIR to 5,500 and changed its mandate to include protecting civilians. Unlike the Russians in Georgia and the U.S. in Haiti, the French proposed to lead an operation to implement a PKO mandate already authorized by the UNSC, and did so only after it was clear there would be a delay until the UN's force could be fully deployed. The French force numbers about 2,500, approximately 1,000 of whom are in Rwanda at a given time.

The Security Council has welcomed the French-led force and, under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, authorized it to use all necessary measures to achieve its humanitarian objectives. France neither sought nor will receive funds from UN assessments or from a UN-administered voluntary fund. This contrasts with the U.S. desire for a Haiti force funded by UN assessments, and a Russian desire for a UN-administered voluntary fund to help finance CIS operations in Georgia.

In the past France has supported the Hutu-dominated government of Rwanda and trained and equipped its military, elements of which have been responsible for the worst acts of genocide. The UN endorsement of the French mission, and France's obligation to report to the UN on its action, were necessary to convince Tutsi rebels that France's objectives would be humanitarian and its mission would be carried out in a neutral manner.

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